**History of McLaren**

McLaren Racing Limited, trading as Vodafone McLaren Mercedes, is a British [Formula One](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Formula_One) team based in [Woking](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woking" \o "Woking), Surrey, England, United Kingdom. McLaren is best known as a Formula One constructor but has also competed and won in the [Indianapolis 500](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indianapolis_500) and [Canadian-American Challenge Cup](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Can-Am) (Can-Am). The team is the second oldest active team (after Ferrari) and one of the most successful teams in Formula One, having won 182 races, 12 drivers' championships and 8 constructors' championships.

Founded in 1963 by New Zealander [Bruce McLaren](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruce_McLaren), the team won its first Grand Prix at the [1968 Belgian Grand Prix](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1968_Belgian_Grand_Prix) but their greatest initial success was in Can-Am, where they dominated from 1967 to 1971. Further American triumph followed, with Indianapolis 500 wins in McLaren cars for [Mark Donohue](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Donohue) in [1972](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1972_Indianapolis_500) and [Johnny Rutherford](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johnny_Rutherford) in [1974](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1974_Indianapolis_500) and [1976](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1976_Indianapolis_500). After Bruce McLaren died in a testing accident in 1970, [Teddy Mayer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teddy_Mayer) took over and led the team to their first Formula One constructors' championship in [1974](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1974_Formula_One_season), with [Emerson Fittipaldi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emerson_Fittipaldi) and [James Hunt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Hunt) winning the drivers' championship in 1974 and [1976](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1976_Formula_One_season) respectively. 1974 also marked the start of a long standing sponsorship by [Phillip Morris](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Altria_Group)' [Marlboro](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marlboro_(cigarette)" \o "Marlboro (cigarette))cigarette brand.

In 1981 McLaren merged with [Ron Dennis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ron_Dennis)' Project Four Racing; Dennis took over as team principal and shortly after organised a buyout of the original McLaren shareholders to take full control of the team. This began the team's most successful era: with [Porsche](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Porsche_in_motorsport) and [Honda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honda_Racing_F1) engines, [Niki Lauda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niki_Lauda" \o "Niki Lauda), [Alain Prost](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alain_Prost) and [Ayrton Senna](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ayrton_Senna" \o "Ayrton Senna) took between them seven drivers' championships and McLaren six constructors' championships. The combination of Prost and Senna was particularly dominant—together they won all but one race in [1988](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1988_Formula_One_season)—but later their rivalry soured and Prost left for [Ferrari](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scuderia_Ferrari). Fellow English team [Williams](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Williams_F1) offered the most consistent challenge during this period, the two winning every constructors' title between [1984](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1984_Formula_One_season) and [1994](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1994_Formula_One_season). However, by the mid-1990s Honda had withdrawn from Formula One, Senna had moved to Williams and the team went three seasons without a win. With [Mercedes-Benz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mercedes-Benz_HighPerformanceEngines) engines, [West](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_(cigarette)) sponsorship and former Williams designer [Adrian Newey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adrian_Newey), further championships came in [1998](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1998_Formula_One_season) and [1999](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1999_Formula_One_season) with driver [Mika Häkkinen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mika_H%C3%A4kkinen) and during the 2000s the team were consistent front-runners, driver [Lewis Hamilton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewis_Hamilton) taking their latest title in [2008](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_Formula_One_season). In 2009 Dennis retired as team principal of McLaren handing the former role to longtime McLaren employee [Martin Whitmarsh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Whitmarsh).